

Quick guide

Full-time undergraduate courses

Overview

You can use this document to find the correct guidance that you should be following when entering courses onto the Courses Management Service to ensure courses meet policy and the student support regulations.

For more detailed information on how to add a course, amend a course and general 'how to' information, please refer to the Courses Management Service User Guide on the HEP Services website.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the details we hold for all your full-time undergraduate courses are correct and meet the relevant student support regulations. This will ensure that students are assessed against the correct course details and that, where applicable, fee payments to students are accurate.

Eligibility

A full-time undergraduate course normally requires a student to attend the university or college, or elsewhere for at least 24 weeks within the year and, during that time, they are expected to undertake:

- periods of study
- tuition
- learning in the workplace
- a sandwich work placement that does not meet the sandwich year out criteria

These should amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week.

Academic years

The academic year is defined in the regulations as a 12-month period beginning on either 1 September, 1 January, 1 April or 1 July depending on when the course started.

This means that the maximum Tuition Fee Loan, Maintenance Grant and loan for living costs awarded to a student starting their course in September or October, for example, covers the academic year from 1 September until 31 August the following year. If a course runs beyond

the end of the academic year, students will not be funded for the period between the end of the academic year and the end of the last term.

The table below shows the academic years depending on the course start dates.

Date course started	Academic year
Between 1 August and 31 December	1 September - 31 August
Between 1 January and 31 March	1 January - 31 December
Between 1 April and 30 June	1 April - 31 March
Between 1 July and 31 July	1 July - 30 June

Term dates

Term dates allow us to determine when and how much to pay your students, depending on how long they are studying with you that year. It's vital that the number of teaching weeks, that's the time your students are attending lectures, undertaking course work or taking exams, is accurate.

Term start dates

Your term dates should be linked to the season your course begins, there are restrictions to how early a term can begin. This is to make sure students' payments are spread out throughout the academic year. The table below shows the term date borders:

Season (Academic Year Start)	Term 1 No earlier than	Term 2 No earlier than	Term 3 No earlier than
AUT (Aug- Dec)	1 August	1 January	1 April
WIN (Jan - Mar)	1 January	1 April	1 July
SPR (Apr - Jun)	1 April	1 July	1 January
SUM (July)	1 July	1 January	1 April

The only exception to this rule is the final course year, where you can compress term dates into the remaining period of attendance.

In the years that a bank holiday falls at the beginning of April, the term 3 start date should be 3 April at the earliest. Our system schedules payments before the bank holiday, which means even if a term 3 start date falls on 1 or 2 April, the payments will need to be processed in March.

Freshers weeks

We do not count Freshers weeks as weeks of teaching, unless your students are attending lectures, doing course work or taking exams, they should not be included in your term dates. If you want this week to be marked as the start of term for funding, then it is important to remove a week from your term length.

Holiday periods

You should account for holiday periods when entering term dates, do not include them within any term. If a student started their course in October, we would expect the term dates to exclude the Christmas and Easter holiday periods.

Midterm holidays

In CMS we only need the start date and end date of each term. You should remove a week from your term length if you have a midterm holiday.

Exam periods

Include exam periods in your term dates, as they count within your overall teaching weeks. However, do not include periods where students are waiting for their results.

Semesters vs terms

Many HEPs operate on two semesters, rather than three separate terms. We pay students at three points throughout their academic year, so we still need to maintain the three terms in our systems. If you operate on semesters, you should create term dates that reflect as closely as possible your students' study pattern. You could use any holiday periods given in the second semester as a natural break for your terms.

Long courses

Any course term dates that are over 30 weeks and 3 days are classed as long courses. The length of your course could entitle some students to more maintenance support. CMS will notify you when you enter term dates that exceed 30 weeks and 3 days and ask you to confirm that these are correct.

Where the long course status changes from one academic year to the next, you should check that your term dates are accurate, as this can be an indicator that term dates are incorrectly entered.

Fees

You can enter different fees at course level, for each domicile and for each year of the course.

A common error when entering fees is an increase for returning students. You should check when you are adding course fees to a new academic year that, providing their previous year was not a placement year, their fees have not increased

Postgraduate courses for Scottish students

From AY 2020/21, you can add postgraduate courses for Scottish students as a postgraduate course rather than an undergraduate course.

We have created a domicile radio button for Scotland within the courses tab on the Courses Management Service (CMS) to allow you to add this type of course.

For more details please see the Scottish Postgraduate Courses Quick Guide.

HND and HNC courses for Scottish students

From AY 2020/21 HEPs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales are not able to use the title 'HND' or 'HNC' for courses offered to Scottish students. You can still choose the qualification of Higher National Diploma (HND) or Higher National Certificate (HNC) on CMS, but you cannot include this in your course title.

Apprenticeship and graduate entry course

Apprenticeship courses and graduate entry courses are not eligible for funding and should not be added to the Courses Management Service.